## ALERT - EPI Update, July 3, 2013 - ALERT Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE) lowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

## Possible outbreak of Cyclospora; test patients with consistent symptoms

In the last two weeks, seven cases of *Cyclospora* infection have been identified in Iowa. The seven cases reside in several Iowa counties. Public health is investigating to identify possible common exposures. Two other Midwestern states are also reporting one to three cases this week, and are investigating.

The symptoms of *Cyclospora* infection are distinct from other diarrheal illnesses in that symptoms last an average of fifty-seven (57) days in immuno-competent patients, and may have 5 to 15 bouts of watery diarrhea per day. Fatigue and anorexia are prominent and other symptoms include nausea, flatulence, abdominal cramping, low-grade fever, and weight loss. Persons who are immune-compromised will have more severe and longer lasting symptoms. Recommended treatment is trimethoprim-sulfamethoxazole twice daily for 7 days (160 mg trimethoprim and 800 mg sulfamethoxazole in adults).

*Important:* When ordering an O&P (ova and parasite test), *Cyclospora* must be specifically ordered. Please submit specimens to State Hygienic Laboratory for testing.

Cyclosporiasis is an intestinal illness caused by the microscopic parasite *Cyclospora cayetanensis*. People can become infected with *Cyclospora* by consuming food or water contaminated with the parasite. *Cyclospora* is not spread person to person. In the United States, foodborne outbreaks of cyclosporiasis, identified since the mid-1990s, have been linked to various types of fresh produce, including raspberries, basil, snow peas, and mesclun lettuce; no commercially frozen or canned produce has been implicated.

Only ten cases have been identified in Iowa over the last 20 years.

For more information, visit:

<u>www.idph.state.ia.us/Cade/DiseaseIndex.aspx?disease=Cyclospora</u> or <u>www.cdc.gov/parasites/cyclosporiasis/</u>

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